

Center. Working with city staff, community, and the city council, he led many projects over the years that resulted in major improvements to the city's parks, facilities, and infrastructure. One of Clay's favorite projects was the redevelopment of Old Town Coppell, which has blossomed into a unique, mixed-use area, which embraces the city's history along with bringing together businesses and residents.

Clay is a lifetime resident of Coppell. In 1978, he graduated from Coppell High School where he received Valedictorian honors. Most recently, Clay was recognized as the Class of 2004 Distinguished Alumni. Clay has served on numerous professional and philanthropic organizations throughout North Texas and Coppell including the first Board of Directors of the Coppell ISD Education Foundation and Coppell ISD Strategic Planning Initiative. Clay is an active member of his church where he serves as elder and in the music ministry. Clay and his wife, Terry, are proud parents to two children and one grandson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my distinguished colleagues to join me in wishing Clay Phillips many years of continued success and congratulations as we celebrate his service to the City of Coppell.

IN RECOGNITION OF NATALIE GELB, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE LACKAWANNA HERITAGE VALLEY AUTHORITY

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Natalie Gelb, Executive Director of the Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority. The Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority works to preserve, conserve, and educate the public about the historical, cultural, economic, and natural resources of Lackawanna County. On March 30, Natalie will officially retire from her ED position after twelve years of outstanding service.

A native of Scranton, Pennsylvania, Natalie attended Scranton Central High School and then the University of Maryland, where she graduated magna cum laude with degrees in English and history. Natalie joined the Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority in 2004.

As Executive Director of the Authority, Natalie rehabilitated the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail and worked to foster closer relationships with other area organizations and institutions. The Lackawanna River Heritage Trail is part of a unique, seventy-mile, multi-purpose trail system. The trail begins at the confluence of the Lackawanna and Susquehanna Rivers in Pittston and continues north where it connects with the Delaware & Hudson Rail Trail. When Natalie began her work in 2004, the trail system was underdeveloped. But under her leadership, it was transformed into a highly utilized attraction in Lackawanna County, now drawing over 300,000 visits a year.

In addition to serving as Heritage Valley Authority's Executive Director, Natalie has compiled an impressive personal record of service to others and her community. She currently serves on the boards of the Jewish Family Service, the Alliance of National Heritage Areas, and the NEPA Health Care Foun-

ation. She is a member of the President's Advisory Council of Keystone College, Living Independently for Elders (LIFE), the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, and the Steering Committee for Women in Philanthropy.

It is an honor to recognize Natalie for all that she has done while leading the Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority. I wish her the best in retirement.

TAR SANDS TAX LOOPHOLE ELIMINATION ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am reintroducing the Tar Sands Tax Loophole Elimination Act. This bill will ensure that oil companies can no longer sidestep paying their fair share into the dedicated trust fund created so that, in the event of an oil spill, there are resources immediately available for cleanup.

The Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, authorized in 1990, ensures we have funding available to pay for the immediate costs of cleaning up oil spills. It is funded by an eight cents per barrel excise tax on crude oil and petroleum products. In 2011, however, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued a misguided decision stating that oil derived from tar sands is not considered crude oil and is therefore currently exempt from the tax that pays into the Fund.

Oil that comes from tar sands is a thick, sticky form of crude oil that can be more difficult and costly to clean up than other types of crude. In 2010, for example, a pipeline owned and operated by a Canadian company, Enbridge, spilled more than 850,000 gallons of tar sands oil into a waterway that flows into the Kalamazoo River in Michigan. That has been one of the largest and costliest pipeline spills in American history, with the price tag now at \$1.2 billion dollars.

While I do not support the development of tar sands—doing so is environmentally destructive and carbon-intensive, we should not keep in place a loophole that lets big oil companies off the hook for cleaning up their tar sands spills. The Tar Sands Tax Loophole Elimination Act would add oil derived from tar sands and oil shale to the definition of crude oil, closing the current loophole and ensuring that oil companies pay into the fund. Oil companies already get billions of dollars in taxpayer-based subsidies, and this bill will ensure they will not be given an additional free ride on tar sands and any future oil shale development.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOME RULE CLEMENCY ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Home Rule Clemency Act, a bill that would give the District of Columbia exclusive authority, like the

states and territories, to grant clemency to offenders prosecuted under its local laws.

While District law appears to give the mayor authority to grant clemency (D.C. Code 1–301.76), it is currently the opinion of the Department of Justice (DOJ) that the president, and not the mayor, has the authority to issue clemency for most local offenses prosecuted under D.C. law, particularly felonies prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney in the D.C. Superior Court. Under current practice, clemency petitions for D.C. convictions, like federal convictions, are submitted to the DOJ for the president's consideration.

Whether or not the DOJ's view is correct, my bill would remove all doubt that the District, and not the president, has the authority to issue executive clemency for local offenses. The District, like states and territories, should have full control of its local criminal justice system, the most basic responsibility of local government. Since the D.C. Council has the authority to enact local laws, District officials are in the best position to grant clemency for local law convictions. My bill would provide all clemency authority not currently reserved to the Mayor under D.C. Code 1–301.76 to the District government and would give D.C. the discretion to establish its own clemency system.

This bill is an important step in establishing further autonomy for the District in its own local affairs. I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

HONORING EDDIE J. FAIR, JR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mr. Eddie J. Fair, Jr. who is a product of Ruleville, MS.

At an early age Mr. Eddie J. Fair, Jr. learned the importance of education, while attending and graduating from Ruleville Central High School. He also learned the meaning of hard work, as he was the son of a sharecropper, who worked for \$3.00 a day. With those principles embedded in his soul, Mr. Fair went on to become a proud graduate of Jackson State University. He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice and a Master's degree in Public Policy and Administration. He quickly learned that public service was his niche during the five years he spent working in the office of Student Affairs of his alma mater. Mr. Fair then went on to work some 20 plus years in the automobile business, which he mastered in and out. From selling cars to becoming a finance manager then the promotion to finance director, he knew he wanted to be a helping hand to his community. In 2003, Mr. Eddie Fair was the first elected African American Tax Collector in Hinds County (the largest county in the state of Mississippi). He is currently serving in his third term and looks forward to many more years of serving the citizens of Hinds County. This small-town country boy believes that "No dreamer is ever too small and no dream is ever too big!" This is the very reason that he continues his efforts to remain involved with community issues and educates the public with frequent informational sessions.